NOTE XXIV.

NOTES ON TIMELIIDÆ.

BY

R. BOWDLER SHARPE,

F. L. S., F. Z. S. etc. Department of Zoology, British Museum.

During a visit to the Leyden Museum last September I was able to examine several species of birds, which had not come under my notice during the preparation of the 7th volume of the »Catalogue of Birds". Some of the species proved to be very distinct and I greatly regret that they have been omitted from the volume or relegated to foot-notes, as being of doubtful validity. During the whole of the time that this volume was going through the press, I was engaged in the moving of the Zoological Collections from Bloomsbury to South Kensington, and was unable to get abroad for my accustomed course of study in foreign Museums. I am sensible that the value of this volume has been somewhat impaired by these omissions, and I publish these supplementary notes, in order to supply descriptions of several species which are wanting to its pages.

Alethe diademata (Bp.), Sharpe, l. c. p. 58.
Turdus diadematus, Temm. MSS. in Mus. Lugd., undè
Bessonornis diadematus, Bp. Consp. I, p. 302.

I had ventured to unite the species described as above with the better known *Alethe maculicauda* of Hartlaub, and I was

pleased to find from an examination of the type in the Leyden Museum, that this identification was correct. The species is certainly an *Alethe* and not a *Cossypha* or *Bessonornis*, and Dr. Hartlaub was quite right when he referred the species to the former genus, though he appears not to have recognised in his *Alethe maculicauda* of 1861, the *Cossypha diademata* of his »Ornithologie West-Afrika's" of 1857.

Genus ***Cisticola*** (Sharpe l. c. p. 235).

Cisticola oryziola (S. Müll.) as suspected by me (p. 240, footnote) is *C. exilis* (V. & H.). The type in Leyden is in winter plumage, and the red-headed or *ruficeps* stage stands in the Leyden Museum under the name of *C. delicatissima* (Müll. Verh.). I believe, however, that the name was never published.

Suya blythi, Bp. Consp. I, p. 281.

This reference has been given by me as a synonym of *Prinia polychroa* (Cat. B. VII, p. 202). In the Leyden Museum are some birds bearing the unpublished name of *Prinia leucophris* Temm., which I believe to be the types of Bonaparte's *Suya blythi*.

The reddish brown bill points to these birds being allied to *Prinia inornata*, Sykes, which they further resemble in length of wing and the uniform back; the bill, however, seems much larger. As we have not at present been able to trace all the plumages of *Prinia polychroa* in Java, it seems best to suppose that the birds at Leyden may be stages of plumage of the last named-species, or they may be a large-billed race of *P. inornata* indigenous to Java, in which case they must be called *Prinia blythi* (Bp.).

Genus ***Stachyris***, Hodgs. (Sharpe, l. c. p. 532).

Two species require to be added to this genus and the »Key" (p. 532) will want alternation as follows:

a. Chin ashy or white, etc.

a'. Under surface etc. . . . . *nigriceps.* *larvata.*

b'. Under surface etc. . . . . *poliocephala.* *guttata.* *striolata.*

c'. Under surface white; sides of body grey, like the ear-coverts . . . . . *grammiceps.*

Stachyris striolata.

Timalia striolata, S. Müll. Tijdschr. 1838, p. 32. — Bp. Consp. I, p. 217 (1850). — Gray, Handl. B. I, p. 315, no. 4699 (1809).

Stachyris poliocephala, Sharpe, Cat. Birds, VII, p. 534, pt. (errore).

Following Gray, I united the *Timalia striolata* of Müller to *T. poliocephala* of Temminck. I find, on examining the types, that I was quite wrong in this identification, for *T. striolata* is a very distinct species, and is in fact so closely allied to *Stachyris guttata*, as to be almost inseparable from it. I had unfortunately no specimen at hand of the latter species wherewith to compare the types of *T. striolata*, but on comparing them with the descriptions given in the »Catalogue of Birds" (vol. VII, p. 535) I believe that the ground-colour of the two species is different, as the Sumatran bird could not be described as »rufescent-brown" above. On the contrary the colour is dark sooty brown and the ovate white spots are confined to the hind neck and sides of neck.

The measurements are as follows:

	Total length.	culmen.	wing.	tail.	tarsus.
a. ♂. Sumatra (S. Müller).	5.7	0.75	2.7	2.2	1.0
b. ♂. » » » .	5.8	0.7	2.65	2.4	1.0

Stachyris grammiceps.

Myiothera grammiceps, Temm. Pl. Col. 448, fig. 3 (1828).

Timalia grammicephala, Bp. Consp. I, p. 217 (1850). Gray, Handl. B. I, 315, no. 4628 (1869).

Adult male. (Type of species). General colour above chestnut rufous from the hind neck to the upper tail-coverts; wing-coverts like the back; bastard-wing and primary-coverts ashy brown edged with rufous; quills dusky, externally like the back, the secondaries entirely like the latter; tail-feathers dark brown edged with chestnut and barred with dusky under certain lights; head and hind-neck dark slate-colour, rather more dusky on the forehead and occiput, which are streaked with white, the feathers having white margins; lores, sides of face, ear-coverts and sides of neck slate-colour, the latter with narrow white shaft-streaks; cheeks, throat, breast, and abdomen, pure white, the sides of the body, flanks, and under tail-coverts slaty-grey with white shaft-streaks, a little more distinct on the latter; sides of the upper breast also slaty-grey, somewhat mottled, the feathers adjoining the breast being white, with slaty-grey edgings and tips; thighs brown; under wing-coverts dark slaty-grey; quills dusky below, edged with fulvous along the inner web. Total length 4.4 inches, culmen 0.55, wing 2.15, tail 1.65, tarsus 0.75.

Adult female. Similar to the male in colour, but with the under tail-coverts and feathers of the vent browner. Total length 4.5 inches, culmen 0.55, wing 2.35, tail 1.7, tarsus 0.8.

Genus ***Turdinus*** (Sharpe, l. c. p. 539).

Turdinus lepidopleurus.

Cacopitta lepidopleura, Bp. Consp. I, p. 257 (ex Temm. MSS. in Mus. Lugd.).

Macronus lepidopleurus, Gray, Handl. B. I, p. 318, no. 3751 (1869).

Turdinus lepidopleurus, Sharpe, Cat. Birds, VII, p. 539, note (1883).

The Leyden Museum very kindly exchanged an example of this Javan species with me, and I was able to compare it with *T. macrodactylus* from Malacca. I am of opinion that it should be specifically united to the latter, as the only difference which I can see is in the somewhat more chestnut tinge of the upper tail-coverts and tail.

Turdinus perspicillatus.

Cacopitta perspicillata, Bp. Consp. I, p. 257 (1850, ex Temm. MSS. in Mus. Lugd.).

Macronus perspicillatus, Gray, Handl. B. I, p. 540 (1809).

Turdinus perspicillatus, Sharpe, Cat. Birds, VII, p. 540, note.

Considered by me in the »Catalogue" to be a doubtful species, but I find from an examination of the type that it is perfectly distinct. It comes nearest to *T. fulvescens* and the „Key to the Species" on p. 540 will require modification as follows:

c^4. Ear-coverts light brown . . . . *sepiarius.*

d^4. Ear-coverts ashy grey.

c^5. A black eyebrow; lores white; a black spot in front of the eye . . . . . *perspicillatus.*

d^5. No black eyebrow; no black spot in front of the eye; lores ashy whitish . *fulvescens.*

Adult male. (Type of species). General colour above dark olive-brown, the breast and median wing-coverts like the back, the greater series, bastard-wing, primary-coverts and quills dark brown, externally reddish brown, especially the latter which appear more reddish brown than the back; upper tail-coverts more rufous brown than the back; tail dark reddish brown, externally rufous brown; head and hind-neck more dingy olive-brown than the back, the feathers of the crown with obsolete dusky margins; base of forehead blackish, extending in a line along the sides of the crown, so as to form a tolerably distinct eyebrow; lores conspicuously white; in front of eye a black spot; eyelid white, before and behind, dusky above and below;

sides of face and ear-coverts ashy grey, the latter with distinct white shaft-streaks, the fore part of the cheeks whiter; sides of neck ashy grey with a slight wash of olive; throat white; fore-neck and breast ashy grey with longitudinal white centres to the feathers; abdomen, flanks, thighs and under tail-coverts reddish brown with more or less of an olive tinge, the abdomen somewhat washed with grey; under wing-coverts and axillaries reddish brown; quills dark brown below, narrowly fringed with light reddish buff along the inner web. Total length 5.6 inches, culmen 0.85, wing 3.35, tail 1.85, tarsus 1.05.

Corythocichla epilepidota.

Myiothera epilepidota, Temm. Pl. Col. II, pl. 448, fig. 2 (1827).

Macronus epilepidotus, Gray, Gen. B. I, p. 210 (1846); id. Handl. B. I, p. 319, no. 4774 (1869).

Turdirostris epilepidota, Bp. Consp. I, p. 218 (1850).

Myiothera murina, S. Müll. Blyth, Ibis, 1865, p. 47 (nec S. Müll.).

Brachypteryx epilepidota, Salvad. Ucc. Born. p. 224 (1874).

Turdinus epilepidotus, Sharpe, Cat. Birds, VII, p. 540, note (1883).

This species appears to be very closely allied to *C. striata* and *C. brevicaudata*, of which species I had unfortunately no specimens by me for actual comparison. From the descriptions, however, I gather that the following characters must be added to the »Key to the Species" (p. 592):

c. Throat white; under surface of body rufescent, broadly streaked with white . . . . . *epilepidota.*

The following is a description of the original specimens in the Leyden Museum.

Adult male. (Sumatra: Type of species). General colour above fulvous brown, mottled with black margins to the feathers, which have also a distinct shaft-streak of fulvous on the mantle and back; wing-coverts reddish brown,

the median and greater series tipped with triangular white spots, forming a double wing-bar; primary-coverts and quills dark brown, externally reddish brown; lower back, rump and upper tail-coverts uniform reddish brown; tail-feathers dull reddish brown with indistinct dusky cross-bars under certain lights; head rather more dusky brown than the back, mottled with black margins to the feathers; lores and a distinct eyebrow white, extending to the sides of the nape, the superciliary streak somewhat mottled with dusky margins; feathers in front of the eye dusky; sides of face and cheeks dull white with dusky margins, forming an indistinct moustache; ear-coverts ashy grey with whitish shaft-lines, the upper margin blackish, forming a broad streak below the superciliary line; throat white, with faint remains of dusky margins; remainder of under surface of body broadly streaked; the breast and sides of body light reddish brown with longitudinal white centres to the feathers, less distinct on the flanks, which appear uniform; centre of breast and abdomen more broadly striped, the feathers being white with pale reddish margins; under tail-coverts pale reddish brown; under wing-coverts dusky brown, slightly edged with reddish brown; quills dusky brown below, paler along the inner web. Total length 4.2 inches, culmen 0.6, wing 2.05, tail 1.25, tarsus 0.9 (*Mus. Lugd.*).

Young female (Java). More reddish than the male described, the white tips to the wing-coverts smaller and slightly tinged with fulvous; eye-streak also less pronounced and tinged with fulvous; under surface of body more rufous than in the male, the throat whitish, washed with pale rufous on the chin. Total length 4.5 inches, culmen 0.7, wing 2.05, tail 1.4, tarsus 0.95 (*Mus. Lugd.*).

It will be seen that I have added as a synonym *Myiothera murina*, S. Müll. apud Blyth, Ibis, 1865, p. 47. Mr. Hume suppressed the name of *Turdinulus roberti* (Godw. Aust. and Wald.) and added it as a synonym of *T. murinus* (S. Müll.). Both Mr. Eugene Oates and myself follow-

ed Mr. Hume in this identification, as it seemed to me that Blyth's description, though short, suited *Turdinulus roberti* very aptly, and at the same time it was possible for a bird to be of the same species on the mountains of Tenasserim and Sumatra. But I now believe that we were all wrong and the name of *Turdinulus roberti* must be restored to the Tenasserim species.

When at Leyden I diligently searched for the specimen of *Myiothera murina* referred to by Mr. Blyth, and my friend Dr. Jentink assisted me in the search, but we found no species bearing the name that would answer to Mr. Blyth's descriptions. A *Myiothera murina* of Müller we found, it is true, but it was the *Brachypteryx murina* (S. Müll.) of all authors, and the *Crateroscelis murina* of my volume (Cat. B. VII, p. 590).

The only specimens which at all answer to the description given by Mr. Blyth are those of *C. epilepidota*, which also does come from Sumatra, as stated by him, while the true *Myiothera murina*, S. Müll. certainly does *not*. There is no specimen of *Turdinulus roberti* at all in the Leyden Museum.

In fact the whole of Blyth's paper is somewhat confused, and it is difficult even to find out whether he is writing about birds at Leyden or in the Derby Museum at Liverpool. I believe that *Turdinus epilepidotus* was the species which he intended to write about, and that he affixed the name of *Myiothera murina* from memory.

Malacopterum lepidocephalum (Gray), Sharpe, l. c. p. 567.

The slight differences between Javan and Sumatran examples noticed by me (l. c.) are not confirmed by the series in the Leyden Museum.

Malacopterum erythrote, Sharpe, l. c. p. 568.

Without actually comparing specimens, I have no doubt

whatever that *M. erythrote* of my Catalogue is *M. pyrrhogenys* (Temm.), as indeed I hinted in the last mentioned work (p. 588, note). The types of the latter species are from Java, and it is perhaps doubtful whether the type of *M. erythrote* really came from Borneo. The species will, therefore, stand as *Malacopterum pyrrhogenys* (Temm.).

Genus ***Malia***, Schl. (p. 587).

This genus, which I had not seen at the time of writing, is nearly allied to *Mystacornis* and may be separated as follows:

α. Size large; tarsal envelope coarsely scutellated. . . . . *Malia*, p. 587.

β. Size small; tarsal envelope entire. *Mystacornis*, p. 531.

The relationship is interesting, as shewing a link between the Avifaunæ of Madagascar and Celebes.

I append a detailed description of the type of *M. grata*.

Malia grata.

Malia grata, Schl. Notes Leyden Mus. II, p. 165 (1880). — Sharpe, Cat. B. VII, p. 587 (1883).

Adult. General colour above uniform dark olive-green, yellowish on the hind-neck and mantle with obsolete dusky margins; wing-coverts dark olive with olive yellow margins; quills dusky brown, olive yellowish along the outer edge of the primaries, the secondaries darker olive-green; tail-feathers olive brown, edged with olive yellow, and having numerous dusky bars under certain lights; lores and an indistinct line along the sides of the crown, ear-coverts and sides of face dark olive with brighter yellow shaft-streaks; cheeks yellow, mottled with dusky ends to the feathers; throat, breast and abdomen brighter olive-yellow, slightly obscured with dusky endings to the plumes of the throat; sides of body, flanks, thighs and under tail-coverts olive-green, slightly washed with yellow; under wing-coverts and axillaries olive yellow, brighter

along the edge of the wing; quills below ashy olive brown, rather more fulvescent on the inner web. Total length 11 inches, culmen 1.2, wing 5.2, tail 5.0, tarsus 1.9.

Genus ***Stachyridopsis***, Sharpe, l. c. p. 597.

I have placed Salvadori's genus *Cyanoderma* as a synonym of *Mixornis* (p. 575). This I now find to have been an error, *Cyanoderma erythropterum*, the type of Salvadori's genus, not being congeneric with *Mixornis*, but being absolutely the same as *Stachyridopsis*, which must consequently sink into a synonym of *Cyanoderma*.

I entirely overlooked the shape of the nostril in the two genera; for in *Mixornis* the nasal aperture is ovate, situated in front, while the membrane is *posterior*, whereas in *Cyanoderma* and *Stachyridopsis* it is *superior* and so swollen, as to reduce the nasal aperture to a longitudinal, *inferior*, slit, a formation exactly similar to that of *Stachyris*. The form of the bill is, however, much more slender and pointed than in the latter genus and is much more wren-like in structure.

The genus *Cyanoderma*, therefore will contain the following species:

1. *C. erythropterum* (Blyth).
2. *C. bicolor* (Blyth).
3. *C. ruficeps* (Blyth).
4. *C. rufifrons* (Hume).
5. *C. poliogaster* (Hume).
6. *C. melanothorax* (Temm.).
7. *C. pyrrhops* (Hodgs.).
8. *C. chrysæa* (Hodgs.).
9. *C. assimilis* (Wald.).

Cyanoderma melanothorax.

Myiothera melanothorax, Temm. Pl. Col. II, pl. 185, fig. 2 (1823).

Mixornis poliopsis, Bp. Consp. I., p. 217 (ex Boie MSS).

Timalia melanothorax, Gray, Handl. B. I, p. 316, no. 4724 (1869).

Adult male (Type of species). General colour above light rufous, more ferruginous on the crown of the head; wing-coverts bright ferruginous, forming a conspicuous shoulder-patch; quills dusky brown, externally like the back; upper tail-coverts like the back; tail-feathers dingy reddish-brown with obsolete dusky bars under certain lights, and with a slightly more reddish shade on the margins; forehead dusky blackish; lores whitish, extending over the eye and forming an eyebrow, the hinder portion of the latter being pale ashy grey, like the ear-coverts, sides of the face and sides of neck; cheeks rather whiter; throat white, separated from the breast by a præpectoral collar of black; sides of upper breast ashy grey; centre of breast creamy white; the abdomen, flanks, thighs, and under tail-coverts pale fulvous brown; under wing-coverts and axillaries pale rufous buff; quills dusky below, pale rufescent along the edge of the inner web. Total length 5.2 inches, culmen 0.65, wing 2.4, tail 2.15, tarsus 0.9.

Adult female. Similar in colour to the male. Total length 5.2 inches, wing 2.25, tail 2.2, tarsus 0.85.

In the type-specimens the edges to the quills and tail-feathers are of about the same colour as the back; but in some others more recently added to the collection they are rather more ferruginous. I am of opinion that in the living bird the pectoral collar is not continuous, but that there is a ring of black separating the throat from the breast, while a broad black streak occurs on either side below the hinder cheeks. The præpectoral ring is formed by black *tips* to the feathers, whereas the black lateral streaks are caused by the half of the feather being entirely black *longitudinally*.

It follows, therefore, that an entire revision of the

»Key to the Species" is necessary, as it is evident that *C. melanothorax*, by reason of its pectoral band, is closely allied to *C. poliogaster* of Hume. I propose the following re-adjustment:

a. With no pectoral band . . . . *erythropterum* etc.
b. With a pectoral band.
α'. Band on breast black; sides of body and abdomen pale fulvous brown . . . . . *poliopse.*
β'. Band on breast pale olive-brown; sides of body and abdomen grey. . . . . *poliogaster.*

Genus ***Alcippe*** (Sharpe, l. c. p. 618).

Alcippe pyrrhoptera.

Napothera pyrrhoptera, Bp. Consp. I, p. 358 (1850, *ex* Boie MSS. in Mus. Lugd.).
Macronus pyrrhopterus, Gray, Handl. B. I, p. 318, no. 4768 (1869).

A large series of this bird and an allied species named in the Museum *Napothera phaionota* (Kuhl) are in the collection at Leyden. The last-named species is identical with *Alcippe cinerea*, Blyth (Sharpe, Cat. B. VII, p. 622), but I cannot find that Boie's name was ever published.

A. pyrrhoptera appears to me to be a distinct species, closely allied to *A. phayrii*, having the ear-coverts similar to the under surface of the body in colour. It differs, however, in having the head rufescent like the back and the external aspect of the wings, tail and upper tail-coverts rufous.